

(AF) ELIZABETH
MARRIED: SPARROW, THOMAS
RAISED: HAWKS, DENNIS

DRAWER | A

71, 2009.025.05552

CHILDREN OF JOSEPH HAWKS,
SR



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Hanks Family

Children of
Joseph Hanks, Sr.

Elizabeth

Excerpts from newspapers and other
sources

From the files of the
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LINCOLN LORE

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FORT WAYNE, INDIANA

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THE THOMAS SPARROW WILL

The discovery, in the Spencer County, Indiana, Court House, of a copy of the Thomas Sparrow will, bearing the name of Nancy Hanks Lincoln, mother of the President, establishes many dates which have lacked documentary confirmation and opens up other questions which have long been debated.

It is to be regretted that the original will has not been discovered; but the copy preserved is just as important for all historical purposes. The copy of the will brought to light was made by John Morgan, Clerk of the Spencer County Court, in 1818 at the time the will was probated. The clerk's record, confirming the validity of the will is valuable for establishing certain historical data. We only have room in this issue of Lincoln Lore for the reproduction of the copy of the will.

The Will

"October 9th, 1818—This twenty-first day of September in the year Eighteen Hundred and Eighteen Thomas Sparrow is in his perfect senses on this date above mentioned, that all the goods and chattels that the above mentioned Thomas Sparrow has is to belong to his wife Elizabeth Sparrow so that she can do as she pleases with it until her death and after her death the whole of the property above mentioned is to fall to Dennis Hanks when he comes of age and that the above T. Sparrow has made choirs of Thomas Carter to be his Executor for his effects above written this from under my hand and seal.

"Thomas (X) Sparrow (his mark).

"Test: David Casebier, Nancy (X) Lincoln (her mark).

"Indiana State & County of Spencer. Sect."

Nancy Lincoln's Mark

The fact that Lincoln's mother made her mark instead of writing her own name is the first observation of importance. While this is not absolute proof that she could not write, it contributes much to that supposition. Thousands of pioneers who could read their Bibles, other books, and newspapers had little need of the art of writing, which they did not learn. The only other signature of Lincoln's mother known to exist is on a deed signed in 1814 in which she joins with her husband in conveying the title to the land they owned on Mill Creek in Kentucky. On this occasion, also, she made her mark.

A Hoosier Woman

As far as is known there has not been available, before the discovery of the Sparrow will, a duly authorized document which would establish the residence of Nancy Hanks Lincoln in

the State of Indiana. Although no one has ever questioned the fact that she resided in the Hoosier State and that she lies buried in what is now Spencer County, her name on the will of Thomas Sparrow becomes an exceedingly valuable exhibit of proof, and from the viewpoint of the documentary historian supplies an authoritative source of the very greatest importance.

The Date of Mrs. Lincoln's Death

Apparently it was not until 1851, after his father had passed away, that Abraham Lincoln entered in the family Bible the date of his mother's death. Whether it was copied from some record or recalled from memory is not known, but the date of the Sparrow will and the dates on the record of probate, which is also inscribed on the early manuscript, seem to confirm the family record as to the approximate date of Nancy Lincoln's death.

That Mrs. Lincoln was living on September 21, 1818, is evident from her signature on the document bearing that date. Evidently she was not available for testimony as to the validity of the will on October 9, 1818, at the time the will was probated, or she would have been summoned by the clerk. This would place the date of her death between September 21, 1818, and October 9, 1818. Abraham Lincoln wrote in the family Bible:

"Nancy Lincoln, wife of Thomas Lincoln, died October 5, 1818."

The Death of Mr. and Mrs. Sparrow and Mrs. Lincoln

The story of Nancy Lincoln's death has usually been associated with the passing of Thomas and Elizabeth Sparrow. The story in part, as related by Herndon, follows:

"Early in October of the year, 1818, Thomas and Betsy Sparrow fell ill of the disease (milk sick) and died within a few days of each other . . . Meanwhile Abe's mother had also fallen a victim to the insidious disease. Her sufferings, however, were destined to be of brief duration. Within a week she too rested from her labors. She 'struggled on day by day,' says one of the household, 'a good Christian woman, and died on the seventh day after she was taken sick.'"

Just one week after the will was made, on September 28, 1818, Thomas Carter made oath that he was "a bystander and heard the same (the will) acknowledged." It is likely that it was on this day that Thomas Sparrow passed away. On October 5, 1818, just one week after the previous date, David Casebier, who had joined with Nancy Lincoln in witnessing the will,

made oath that Thomas Sparrow was of sound mind when he made the will. It may be observed that this oath was made on the same day that Mrs. Lincoln died.

Between the dates of September 21 and October 5 Elizabeth Sparrow, wife of Thomas, passed away, all of which is in harmony with the general details of the family tradition.

The Beneficiary

There are affidavits in Hardin County, Kentucky, which grew out of the settlement of Thomas Sparrow's estate, which affirm that Thomas and his wife had no children of their own and that Dennis Hanks became the heir to their property. The newly discovered will supports this affidavit, as Dennis Hanks is named as the only beneficiary after the death of Mrs. Sparrow.

There is no doubt about the relationship between Dennis Hanks and the Sparrow family, as we have the former's own statement to the effect that he was the illegitimate child of Nancy Hanks (not to be confused with Lincoln's mother), a sister of Elizabeth Hanks Sparrow, and that he was brought up by his foster parents, Thomas Sparrow and wife.

Mrs. Lincoln's Relation to the Sparrows

Herndon claims that "Nancy Hanks, the mother of the President, at a very early age was taken from her mother Lucy,—afterwards married to Henry Sparrow—and sent to live with her aunt and uncle, Thomas and Betsy Sparrow." There are those who may feel that her signature as a witness on the will of Thomas Sparrow would contribute to the reliability of the above conclusion. If the Sparrows had reared Nancy Hanks Lincoln from childhood, as Herndon alleged, or as Lamson, who used the Herndon manuscripts states, "that they were the only parents she ever knew," the place to look for her name would be among the beneficiaries, instead of among the witnesses to the will.

The fact that she was not named in the will supports the well-established claim that no such relation existed between the Sparrows and Nancy Lincoln as has been alleged. Although she may have been directly related to Mrs. Elizabeth Hanks Sparrow through her father and also to Thomas Sparrow by her own mother's marriage to Henry Sparrow, brother of Thomas, no conclusion may be drawn from her name as a witness on the will, that Thomas and Elizabeth were her foster parents.

Dear Mr. Mc Murtry -

4-2-71

Thank you for the photo stat copies of the Sparrow's.
Will read them thoroughly you can be sure.

Here are 3 reasons for my interest:

#1. In a family bible — which the owner would not permit me to see because I asked "through what line" was alleged to be written by her father, "we are soon Cousins of Abraham Lincoln". Being inquisitive I wanted to know if through her father's paternal or maternal line. She got quite perturbed & said "do you question my father?" And I said "no, but wanted to know if this would be through his father's father or mother's side. And since I'm convinced she didn't really know she got real upset that I'd even think of disputing her father's word!

#2. Two years ago a cousin sent me the following:
"The following items & records are from either a diary or family record kept by a great aunt of Grandpa Menden's. Her name was "Sucky Sparrow" — she was a nurse-
count Washington at Valley Forge all thru the winter.
at night she would slip out to get whiskey to make

"Whiskey slings" for the soldiers that were sick. Also found patches of material to mend their clothes. She saw Geo Washington lay the Cornerstone of the Capital, Saw the British burn Washington in 1812. She did her own spinning & weaving all her life. She lived to be 100 years old & was spinning & working the day she died."

"Also in this family record was the story of the great grandfather Daddy being pressed into the British Army during the Rev. War and had to go back to England and no record of his return. The grandfather Daddy moved from Hagerstown Md. to West Va.; Va.; Ohio, Ky & Ind. Nancy Hank was with them when they went from Ky. to Ind. Nancy & another girl were captured by Indians. Nancy escaped, the other girl's father lost his life trying to swim the Ohio River to rescue her but she never got back to her family."

3. This year I received a letter from another cousin out west "I have heard that A. Lunsin's mother and our great grandmother were half sisters and I have it in my own mother's hand writing, that would be of interest to everybody."

#1 statement comes from a great great granddaughter of John & Catherine (Sparrow) Dudley through one of their daughters, son's, son's, daughters.

#2 statement was copied by a great great great granddaughter of John & Catherine (Sparrow) Dudley through the same daughters, son's line then thru a daughter's daughters daughter.

#3 statement comes from a great great granddaughter of John & Catherine (Sparrow) Dudley through the same daughters, son's line thru his daughters daughter.

Why my lineage comes up with no such record is beyond me. She is my great grandmother was also a daughter of John & Catherine (Sparrow) Dudley and would have the same relationship! That is, if there is any, which I doubt as my records are, in my opinion, truer.

Richard Dudley = ^{ca} 1755 Mary (Smith)
(1720 - 1782) ch ⑦ (1725 - 1821)

Maria d. y

Mary = Ferdinand Sparrow
(1760-1844) ⑧ 1762-1852

Susan = John Lewis

Berch = Cornelius Morris

Nathan = ① Sophia Farmer ② Mahala Rose

Richard Jr = Elizabeth Jordan

John = Catherine Sparrow
(9-24-1770-3-6-1843) (5-1-1780-11-17-1851)
Ind. Ind. Ind.

① Sarah = John Berry McShone
(10-25-1786-4-12-1872) (10-30-1845-4-4-1863)
Ky. Ind. Ind. 10 ch. 5-28-1820
Clark Co. O.

son of Wm. + Leet (Berry)
McShone

② Catherine = Michael Monahan
d before 1835
W. Ohio

③ Eliza = "Polly" Mary Craig
(1-14-1800-7-25-71) (2-24-1803-5-10-1851)

④ James = Rachel McMenamy
1801

⑤ Nancy = New Love Laybourne
(5-25-1809-12-29-99) (5-20-1808-8-3-90)

⑥ Nathan =
(ca 1810)

⑦ Jonathan = Sarah Laybourne

⑧ (2-12-1811-5-24-84) = 5-7-1833 and John L. Sparrow
Betsey Elizabeth (1814-12-30-1910)
Wm. 2-14-1839 Abigail Bickel

⑨ ca 1816

⑩ Amundis = Thos F. Fisher
(10-24-1824-6-28-1875)

Have most of the descendants of these 10 ch. and only the Monahan
line comes up with the "tradition". Why?

John Dudley moved from Ind. to Ky, to Ohio + finally Ind. It is

Presumed he was married in Ind. as his father leased 100 A of
land, from Union Beeson, called the William & Ann, for 1 good
clean bushel of clean tobacco to be delivered to Georgetown
Warehouse, and in 1808 had property near what is
Springfield, O. where he lived til 1830 when he went to
Ind, purchased 900 A+ of land, built his log house,
barns, fences, etc., returned to Ohio + Jan 2, 1835, together
with his children + their families started for Ind. arriving
there Feb 20, 1835. He died + is buried Lafayette Co. Ind.
Catherine (Beasley) Monahan died before this move but 3 of her
children were brought along + raised by their mother's
brother Jonathan. — namely: — James, Mary Ann "Polly"
Ann Louisa. James died Ind. at nearly 100 yrs of age;
Mary Ann married John B. Hampton + Ann Louisa married
Alfred Whellon.

Mary (Beasley) + Fathwell Farrow moved to Springfield, O in 1811
and both buried there. Had 6 children — 3 dtrs + 3 sons.
the girls married into the Farrowell, Smith + Cowgill families —
one son, John remained Ohio where most of his descendants
are: Burgess + Richard moved to DeKalb Noble Co.
Ind. respectively + most of Richard's descendants are
still there — Burgess? — haven't had time to do this
family yet. I'm only an amateur so it takes more longer
to trace people.

if you'd be interested in seeing my Dudley - Sparrow genealogy
I'd be happy to have you come & see it — it might
be of interest to you.

I hope, someday to send it, but not till it is more
complete. I have features too, in some instances.

Again thanks!

Sincerely

Frank Mac Donald

Sparrow
in Hawks Drawer

AF -
ELIZABETH
HANKS

April 6, 1971

Mrs. Ruth MacDonald
511 Crawford Avenue
Dixon, Illinois 61021

Dear Mrs. MacDonald:

I have your letter of April 2nd relative to your Sparrow ancestry, which I read with interest.

I hope that the material I sent you will prove worthwhile in your study.

Yours truly

R. Gerald McMurtry

RGM/nlc

John H. to Jensen

June 13 1865

"The Sparrows and Hankses did ^{imm}migrate into Kentucky together from Virginia, but the Sparrows did not come ~~from~~ to Indiana, except on a visit, if that much - Dennis Hanks to the contrary notwithstanding. I think he says that the Sparrows came to Indiana. The Sparrows may have come from England, but God knows wherefrom - not John nor Dennis. I doubt the whole biographical genealogy of the Lincoln family etc."

